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THE

GODMOTHER'S

TALES.

Little Patty. p. 6.

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Carter

THE

GODMOTHER'S TALES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

SHORT STORIES, SUMMER RAMBLES, CUP OF SWEETS, &c. &c.

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DEDICATION.

MY DEAR HELEN,

AS I am often travelling from one place to another, I have had frequent opportunities of picking up little anecdotes of children, and as you are always in my mind, and that I thought they might afford you some entertainment, I have collected them together in a small Volume, which

I now send you, and sincerely hope you will find amusement in reading it.

I am, my dear HELEN,

Your affectionate Godmother,

E. S.

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THE

GODMOTHER'S

TALES.

LITTLE PATTY.

"I CANNOT think what I shall do," said Dame Watson, as she stood looking at a basket, which was on the table. "Poor Jack has sprained his ancle, and your father will expect his dinner, and wait for it till he loses his patience; for I have no one to carry it to him, and am too ill to go so far myself."

"I am sure, mother," said little Patty, "I can carry it—do let me try;

I know I shall be a long time before I reach the forest, because I shall be obliged to rest myself very often, but I will go as quickly as I can."

"You must try, I think, child," replied the mother, "he had better have his dinner late than not at all. And now you see Patty, that I told you true yesterday, when I said that we all can assist one another, if we are willing to do so, and that even such little creatures as you are, have sometimes an opportunity of being serviceable to others."

"I could not have believed it," said Patty, "but I am very glad of it;" and she took up the basket with great good humour and a light heart, and tripped

away as if she had had a feather on her arm, though she had not reached the end of the lane before she was obliged to put it down and rest herself.

She was too anxious to carry her father his dinner, to allow of her indulging herself more than a few minutes, and she soon took up her basket on the other arm, and walked briskly forward till she came to a farm-yard, which she had to pass through in her way to the forest, but had scarcely entered it, when a great dog jumped out of the barn, and growled at her in such a terrible manner, that she was afraid to proceed.

Not a creature was to be seen any

where about the farm, and she was just thinking that, not daring to pass the dog, she should be obliged to return home, when she heard the voice of a man singing, as she imagined, at no great distance; but as she drew near, she perceived it was a sailor, who sometimes came into the neighbourhood with children's toys to sell, and soon heard his old cry of "*One a penny, come buy my lambs; one a penny, come buy my lambs;*" and saw him advancing towards her, with the board on his head on which he carried his goods; little lambs as white as snow, their necks adorned with pink ribbon, cocks and hens with gilt beaks and feet, and many other pretty things, which she had often longed for, but had never had the means of purchasing.

On telling the sailor that she was afraid of the dog, he offered to take care of her, and keep the ill-natured creature at a distance with his stick; and he was so kind as to take her basket from her, and carry it through the farm-yard and the long lane which led to a field which she had to cross, and there he opened the gate for her, and, as he was going another road, wished her a good day.

Patty thanked the man a thousand times, and thought it would be a long time before *she* should be able to do so great a kindness to any one; indeed she soon began to fear she should fail in the trifle she had now undertaken; for when she reached the end of the field, instead of a gate, she found a very

high stile, which, encumbered with a basket, it would be impossible for her to pass, though she would have thought nothing of it without that load.

She sat down upon the grass to consider on what she should do, and was vexing herself on her father's account, who would, no doubt, suppose himself forgotten; when she saw a girl coming up the path, towards the place where she was sitting, and as soon as she was near enough, begged her to help her over the stile with her basket.

The girl was very willing to oblige her, and desiring she would get over first, handed it to her, and followed immediately, walking on by Patty's side,

who told her where she was going, and the fear she had had of being obliged to return with her father's dinner.—"I wish," added she, "I had it in my power to do as much to serve you as you have done for me; but I am such a little thing, that I cannot help myself, you see."

"You will do a great deal more for me than I have done for you," answered the girl, "if you will carry this letter to my uncle; he is working in the forest at no great distance from the spot where you are going to your father. My aunt is gone to market, and I was obliged to run away and leave her little baby crying in the cradle to run with this letter, because the person who brought it said,

my uncle would lose a great deal if it was not delivered to him directly."

"Oh! pray give me the letter," said Patty, "indeed, I will take great care of it; and if your uncle was a mile further in the forest, I would go to him with all my heart—poor little baby!—pray make haste to return to it—I cannot bear to think that it should be left to cry alone—give me the letter—there—it will be very safe in the corner of my basket—run, run—I'll take care of it."

The girl did not require much pressing; she was happy to return to her little charge, and was out of sight in an instant.

Patty trotted along, with her basket sometimes on one arm, sometimes on the other, till she reached the entrance of the forest, where she found her father, wishing for his dinner, and wondering at his wife's delaying to send it; she delivered the letter as she had been desired, and having emptied her basket, returned towards her home.

She had now no difficulty in crossing the stile, the basket was thrown over, and she jumped after it, and then walked gaily along the road, though it was by no means the nearest way, but she was too much afraid of the great dog to venture to return through the farmyard, and quickening her pace on perceiving some drops of rain, she had

soon passed the gate which led into it, and thought no more of the snarling animal.

The rain encreased, and turning round a clump of trees which grew in the road, she was not a little surprised at seeing the poor sailor trying to shelter his little lambs under the hedge, for he had lost their covering, and the least wet would have spoiled them. He told her, he had heard, after they had parted, that there was to be a fair in the village the next day, and therefore he had thought it best to return, in hopes he should be able to sell some of his merchandize; "and now," said he, "they will all be spoiled, and I shall lose my money; if I had continued my way I

should have been safe at the little inn upon the hill, before the rain came on, and there I meant to buy a covering of some kind or another.—What will become of me? all will be lost."

"Not at all," said Patty, "don't be uneasy, take them off the board, and put them into my basket; I will cover them with my apron, and if we walk fast, we shall be at our door long before the rain pierce through it."

Patty's proposal gave the man great pleasure, and in a minute the lambs, cocks, hens, &c. were all safely lodged in the basket, covered with the little apron, and out of all danger.

He was so glad when they entered Dame Watson's cottage to find that none of his things were damaged, and thought himself so much obliged to Patty for her care of them, that he picked out one of his prettiest lambs and gave it to her, as well as something to each of her little brothers; and in return he was invited to partake of some bacon and potatoes which was prepared for their dinner, and which he accepted with pleasure, for he was very hungry.

He sold all his stock at the fair, and came every year at the same time afterwards, always bringing something new and prettier than the last, and never forgetting a present to Patty, who was

not a little pleased at finding that young as she was, whilst she *wished* to oblige and be serviceable, she should frequently meet with opportunities of being so.

THE INUNDATION.

"YOU are as obstinate as a mule," said Charles Stevenson to his brother James," and full of contradiction into the bargain; if I propose a thing, you always foresee ten thousand difficulties in the way, and insist on proving to me, that I am wrong, and you are never so; and when once you have said a thing, the whole world could not persuade you to unsay it."

"You are quite mistaken," answered James, "when I know that I am right, why should I not maintain it? I am not obliged to be of your opinion."

"You say all this because I am not such a *finicking Quiz* as you are, you always like to walk in the *path*, that you may not dirty your clean stockings; I like to climb over the hedge, when that is the nearest way."

"Very true," replied Charles, "but if I were to propose going over the hedge, you would prefer the path, and moreover, would insist upon it, *that* was the nearest way."

"When we are out in the fields in

the evening at play, and I happen to say, it is almost night, and time to go home, you do not scruple to declare that it is still broad day-light, though it is so dark that I can hardly see my own hand when I hold it up."

"*You* stay out at play in the fields till you can scarcely see your hand!" interrupted James, with a sneer, "you would be afraid of your life of catching cold, particularly if mamma had forgotten to tie a handkerchief about its dear little neck."

You will not find it difficult, my dear Helen, to form an idea of the dispositions of these two boys, from the above conversation. They were both

right, in some measure, in the reproaches they made each other; James was the most obstinate boy in the world, and his greatest pleasure was to differ in opinion from other people.

Charles had, unfortunately, been very delicate when an infant, and his mamma's fears on account of his health had made her more attentive to him than she had been to her other children; his great-coat was made of warmer materials than that of his brother; he was never permitted to go out when the wind blew high, and particular care was taken that he should never eat any thing but what the physician had ordered for him.

He was now grown a strong healthy boy, but he was naturally effeminate in his manner, and the care with which he had been treated in his infancy, had made him still more so; he was so nice in his clothes, that he could not bear to see a speck on any part of them, which was a constant theme of ridicule for his brother James, who was generally up to his ankles in mud, and whose coat wanted brushing half a dozen times in a day.

Notwithstanding this, they never had any serious quarrels; they laughed at each other continually, but that was all; Charles continued to be very careful of himself and his clothes, and James to contradict the whole family, (though he

often brought himself into disgrace by it) and to be what his brother said he was, "as obstinate as a mule."

The sharp conversation, with which I began my story, happened in a large field at six o'clock in the morning in the month of March.—There had been a constant fall of snow for a week or ten days, and the whole face of the country was so covered with it, that the hills, the valleys and the plains, were one mass of white.

Charles and James were extremely tired of the confinement this weather occasioned them, and hearing, one night when they were going to bed, tired of battledore and shuttlecock, domino's, &c.—

that there was a rapid thaw coming on, they agreed to rise early, and go and take a peep at some high hills, about half a mile from the house, supposing that the melting of the snow in different parts of them would give them a strange and new appearance.--Charles was very unwilling to venture forth in such weather, but James, who had the art of persuading him to any thing, promised to conduct him through a pleasant road, which would not be *very wet*, and at the same time offering him his *strong half boots*, he consented to go, and at six o'clock were in the field as I have before mentioned; but meeting with two paths, one leading to the right and the other to the left, a dispute arose about which they had best follow, and Charles having pro-

posed that on the right hand, James as usual, insisted on going to the left, and trudged along as fast as he could, leaving his brother to follow him if he pleased, or to return home if he liked it better.

Charles would have been very glad to go home to the parlour fire, but was afraid of being laughed at, and therefore followed James till they came in sight of the hills.

The snow was melting very fast, and such torrents of water rolled down the sides of them, that the valley beneath had more the appearance of a lake than of pasture ground for cattle.

Casting their eyes around they could not help making some observations on the melancholy scene, but Charles was the first to perceive the cottage of poor Saunderson surrounded with water.

" Good gracious! James," cried he, " what will become of poor Margaret and her children! I know she is quite alone with them, for her husband is gone to Mr. Piercy's for my father, and will not return till Thursday. The water is already above the threshold of the door, and will soon get into the lower room. She is still in bed and suspects nothing of the matter—they will all be drowned, if they have not immediate assistance.——What can be done to get them out! If I was not afraid of catching

cold, and of spoiling my clothes, I would go to them.—I do not think, at present, the water would reach half way to my knee."

James was not without some alarm and uneasiness on account of poor Margaret and her children, but he had heard his brother's opinion, and that was sufficient to determine him to hide his fears, and pretend to believe them to be in no kind of danger.

"I would soon go to their assistance," said he, "if there was any necessity for it, I should not be afraid of taking cold as you are; I do not mind wetting myself; I would as soon be wet as dry; it is all the same to me;—but they are in

no danger, the water will not rise any higher, and in an hour or two, what you now see will disappear, and Margaret may go out and milk her cow without wetting her feet."

"You may say what you please," replied Charles, "but I perceive whilst we are talking, that it is much higher than it was when we came: the poor cow is more than half way her legs in water, and —— bless me! James, look; there is Margaret opening her window—see how terrified she is—she calls for help!——what can be done! ——will no one go to her?"

"Why do not *you* go, master finikin?" said James,"—I wish you would

be quiet—when I think there is any danger I will go to them."

Charles insisted that if he waited a quarter of an hour longer, the water would be so deep, that it would be impossible for him to venture; and James, though he could not determine to give up the point, and let it be seen that he was of his brother's opinion, had much difficulty to restrain himself, for he observed that ths water was rising higher and higher every minute, and that Margaret was too much frightened, to know what she was doing, or what step to take.

Whilst the two brothers were thus deliberating, one, whether to risk spoil-

ing his clothes, and catching cold, the other whether he should give up his opinion, after speaking so positively, they saw Richard, Farmer Wilmot's son, coming towards them, and calling him as loud as they could, that he might make more haste, said they would ask him, what he thought of it.

Richard, however, perceiving as he came a little nearer, the situation of Margaret and her little family, and certain that there was no time to lose, required no one to urge him to do what he saw was immediately necessary, and without attending to the young gentlemen, who continued calling him, threw off his jacket, and his stockings and shoes in an instant, and in the next was

making rapid strides towards the cottage.

Margaret came down stairs, gave him her two little children through the window, one on his back, the other in his arms, and followed as well as she was able. Richard soon placed them all in safety near the spot where Charles and James stood, not a little ashamed at having suffered the farmer's boy to do, what they might have done with so much ease, had they not wasted their time in disputing; for when they came to the place, the water would not have reached above their ankles, and if they had only gone to the house, and roused the poor woman, she might herself have brought

her children away without any difficulty.

Richard was one of the best hearted boys in the world; he dashed once more through the water to the little habitation of Margaret, and in a few minutes had carried every thing he could lift, from the kitchen to the upper room, to save them from the water; he then went to the cow, took her by the horn and led her to her mistress, who was so much rejoiced at finding herself, her children, and her cow in safety, that she could not find words to express her gratitude to Richard, nor did he stay to hear the blessings and thanks she tried to bestow upon him; he was gone in an instant.

Poor Margaret was seated on the stump of an old tree, with her children upon her lap; but she was so wet and cold that she could hardly hold them, and the little creatures were so frightened at the *great heap of water*, as they called it, that they did nothing but cry.

"Well," said Charles, "if we cannot take the credit of having saved them from being drowned, let us, at least, take care that they do not die of cold;—I wish they were at our house by the kitchen fire, eating a warm breakfast; but Margaret trembles so much, that I doubt whether she could walk so far, much less be able to carry her children.—Will you take one of them in your arms, James?—I would carry the little one

if I thought its clothes were clean, do not you think that frock looks a little greasy ?"

Had Charles been silent a moment longer, he would have proposed the very thing he now set his face against, for, vexed and mortified, at having permitted Richard to assist Margaret, when he knew himself to be strong enough to have done the same thing; he was thinking how he should contrive to get them home; when his brother unfortunately made the proposal.

" Nonsense," said he, " do you imagine she has no friends to take care of her!—Margaret, have you no one to

go to, till you can return to your own house?"

"Nobody but my brother, Sir," answered Margaret, "and he lives three miles off; I could not carry my children half a mile, if it were to save their poor innocent lives: I tremble from head to foot with cold and fright."

Charles urged, very strongly, their going to their father's house, where he was sure they would be taken care of; but was at the same time very unwilling to touch either of the children.—If James would carry them both, as Richard had done, he would endeavour, he

said, to drive the cow before him, if he thought she would not *splash him.*

James would not hear of it, in any way, he insisted upon it that Margarets *friends* would come to her, and only laughed at his brother's scheme; and they continued disputing the point, without paying any attention to the woman and her children, till to their great surprise they perceived a stout country girl carrying the poor little things away, one on each arm, whilst Richard, assisting their mother to rise, told her that his father begged she would go to the farm where she would be kindly welcome to remain, as long as she found it necessary.

The two young gentlemen followed the little party with their eyes, till they passed through a gate which led to Wilmot's house; they then looked at each other, but being both conscious of deserving blame, and that when the story was repeated, Richard would receive the praises and commendations which they might have claimed, if they had acted properly, James dared not reproach Charles with his over delicacy, lest he should remind him of obstinacy and contradiction.

They returned home in silence, neither of them opening his lips till they sat down to breakfast, and then the recollection of Margaret and her children giving way to a large plate full of hot

rolls, they began to chat on indifferent subjects, as much as their eagerness to eat would allow them; and when the story of the poor woman's escape, and the part Richard had had in it, was told by the servants of the family, they took care not to drop the least word of their having been present.

Their papa and mamma had a great regard for Saunderson and his family, and gave immediate orders that they should be sent for, and taken care of, at their house till they could return to their own; and James, wishing to be of some service to them, though he would have exposed their lives to the utmost danger rather than bend to his brother's opinion, now proposed that

they should run as fast as they could by a short way to Wilmot's, in the hope of getting there before the servant, and be first to deliver a message to Margaret, which would, they very well knew, give her so much pleasure.

Charles made no objection, for he was a good-natured boy, and he thought, after what had happened in the morning, he should feel more comfortable in his own mind, if he could to any thing to oblige Margaret.

They both ran as fast as they could down the lawn, crossed the road, and were got half way through a narrow lane, when Charles seeing his brother jump over a rivulet, which he thought

would have been too wide for him, exclaimed with a laugh, "Well done, my boy, I will follow you, we shall soon be there at this rate; this is certainly a quarter of a mile nearer than the road through the wood, but it is shockingly dirty; I am up to the knees in mud."

"I do not think it is at all nearer," replied James, stopping immediately, "and I shall get over this gate, cross the field, and go into the wood; you may depend upon it; that we shall be able to walk faster, and, who knows but there may be more brooks down this lane, which we should not be so well able to pass."

Charles wished he had kept his observations to himself, for he suspected that (according to his custom) James was going to leave the road he was in, merely from contradiction; he determined, however, to follow him, and they soon reached the wood, where, the sun not having been able to penetrate, the snow still lay so deep in the path, that they had the greatest difficulty to get along; and Charles was so cold, and so much vexed at having left the lane, that he said more cross things to his brother than he had ever done in his life.

"This is ten times worse," said he, "than wading through the water to assist Margaret, would have been; the

snow is so deep, that every step I take my feet sink into a hole, and I can hardly draw them out again; this is the last time I will ever listen to you."

James only laughed, not thinking it proper to confess that he could scarcely get on; and indeed they were so long, that before they reached the farm, Margaret had left it, with the servant who was sent to fetch her, and her good friend Richard, who insisted on carrying one of the children.

They were very much mortified to find that they had taken so much trouble to no purpose, and immediately turned towards home, Charles by the lane, and James (that he might not ap-

pear wavering and unsteady) took his way through the wood, but not being at all more pleased with the deep snow than his brother had been, he endeavoured to find a better path, and so completely lost himself in the wood, that it was almost night when he got home, where he found Margaret and her children, who had been some hours comfortably seated by the kitchen fire, and his brother Charles but that moment arrived, covered with dirt, and ready to cry with cold and vexation.

He also had lost his way, not by seeking a new path, but by taking the wrong one, without intending it; for thinking himself in the very same lane where his brother had threatened him

with so many brooks, he trudged along through thick and thin, wondering that he did not meet with any, not even the rivulet they had jumped over with so much agility; but what was his astonishment (after walking on through this long lane till he was so fatigued that he could hardly stand) when he found himself on the turnpike-road, at least three miles from his father's house.

Poor Charles was very much dismayed; he had but one thing to do, which was to rest himself upon a stone, and then pursue his way; he arrived at home a few minutes before his brother.

THE STOLEN JACK-ASS.

IN the village of St. Laurence, there lived a poor labourer, who had so many children that, though he worked very hard, he could scarcely procure them bread to eat, and they were too young to be of any use to him.

Jonathan, who was the eldest, wished, however, to do something to assist his parents, and having procured a basket, determined to go round the village every

morning, and enquire among the inhabitants who wanted any thing to be brought from the neighbouring town; offering to perform their errands for them with great care and fidelity, and requiring no payment but what they thought proper to give him.

He soon found employment; the village was very populous, and his basket was always filled, for no one who wanted a little tea or sugar, or a pound or two of salt, but preferred giving him a halfpenny for bringing it home, to quitting their work to go for such trifles.

"My dear Jonathan," said his mother to him one morning, as they sat at breakfast, "I have been looking into

your little bag, and am surprised to see that it is already more than half-full of halfpence. I have not spent one of them, nor will your father allow them to be touched; "for," he says, "if you could but save enough to buy a jack-ass, your fortune would be made. There is not a soul in the village but is willing to trust you, and you would soon have errands of more consequence than an ounce of tea and a quarter of a pound of sugar."

"I fear," replied Jonathan, "it will be very long before I shall be rich enough for that; but I don't see why I should walk into town every day with an empty basket; I can carry it full, as well as I bring it back. I will take my

money and buy some eggs; they will bring me a good price in the town, and I shall have two ways of getting money instead of one. But, my dear mother, you must not imagine that I intend to continue hoarding up my profits like a miser; no, no, if ever I am rich enough to be able to buy an ass, I will bring you what I get every day, to provide for the family."

Jonathan laid out all the money he had in eggs, which he put into his basket on clean straw, and having great plenty of flowers in their garden, which, though they were not rare, were very sweet and pretty, with the help of one of his sisters he made up a dozen of little nosegays, placed them carefully

on the eggs, and taking his stick in his hand, trudged away to the town, pleasing himself with the hope of being able, though in a little way, of becoming useful to his family.

His eggs and his nosegays were soon disposed of, and he returned to St. Lawrence with a basket full of goods for different persons who had employed him.

Coming home one evening, very heavily laden, he met the clergyman of the parish, who after asking him a number of questions about his father and mother, inquired how his business went on, and how long he expected it would be before he could purchase a jack-ass, for

he had heard of Jonathan's plan, his family having long employed him to bring them trifles from the town, and were always pleased with his care and punctuality.

Jonathan said he was afraid it would be a long time first, and that he was very much vexed when he thought of it, "for all this time, Sir," added he, "my poor father and mother reap no benefit from my labour."

The Clergyman was much pleased at his being so desirous to make himself useful, and as soon as he reached his house, asked his eldest daughter to lend him a little silk purse which he had seen in her possession, and into which he put

a crown, desiring each of his children to follow his example.— They all gave what they could afford, and with his purse in his hand, he then called upon a charitable lady who lived in the village, and telling her Jonathan's story, said he hoped she would have the goodness to contribute something towards forwarding the good boy's plan for assisting his family.

This lady, with two others, who were on a visit at her house, were so liberal, that Jonathan was enabledto buy a jack-ass the following week, as well as a pair of panniers; and he could now carry poultry and otherthingsto market, as well as bring home many articles which his basket could not contain, and

which would also have been too heavy for his arm, and he found his business very profitable, and no longer fatiguing, for he had nothing to *carry*, and the walk was a pleasure to him.

He behaved so well that he gained the confidence of the whole neighbourhood; there were several gentlemen's houses near the village. and many respectable farmers in it, and he was shortly after this time appointed letter carrier, and had a smart bag with a shining brass lock slung over his shoulder, of which he was so proud, that he could scarcely prevail upon himself to pull it off even at bed-time.

The labourer, and his wife and chil-

dren now lived very comfortably, for Jonathan brought them plenty of money every week to buy provisions, and the good man's wages, and his wife's spinning, purchased them decent clothing to appear at church in, where the whole family behaved with so much propriety, that every one was glad to see them doing so well.

Several months passed on very happily, when one evening Jonathan's father was seized with a violent pain in his head, and was so ill the next day, that he found it impossible to go to his work: he grew worse and worse, and had a very dangerous fever, which reduced him so much, that he saw no prospect of being able to return to his

labour till the summer.——This was a great misfortune, but it was not the only one they were threatened with, for one morning, when Jonathan went to fetch his jack-ass, that he might go early to the town where he had a great deal to do, and a more than usual quantity of things to bring home—Dapple was not to be found:—he thought for some time, that he had got over the hedge, into the lane, but he was neither there nor on the high road which it led to, nor could he hear any news, though he spent the whole day in seeking him, at the distance of a mile round the village.

The poor boy returned at night, faint with hunger, and weary with walking, but the loss of Dapple was more pain-

ful than hunger or fatigue, and he went to bed weeping bitterly.

He arose with the first dawn of day, and renewed his search, but all to no purpose, he could hear nothing of Dapple, and he went home quite unhappy at seeing that he could no longer assist his father and mother as he had done, and hoped to have continued to do.

I must not, however, be idle, thought he,—I have no longer my jack-ass to bear my burden, but I have still my arms and my basket, and I will do the best I can.—He continued a long time reflecting upon his loss, but was at length roused by the voice of his little brother

William. "Oh Jonathan, Jonathan," cried he, "here comes Dapple,"—and running to the door, he really saw his jack-ass with a bag thrown across his back, and a large basket upon it, creeping slowly towards the house.

The poor animal was so heavily laden that he could scarcely walk, but he was soon relieved by the little family, who all ran out to welcome him, and take the load from his back, wondering at the same time what it could mean, and how it came there.

On entering the house, they were surprised to find in the basket, tea, sugar, currants, rice, and many other different articles of grocery; and that

the bag contained several joints of meat, besides flour, loaves of bread, apples, pears, and other eatables, and the children being hungry, were delighted at what they saw, hoping they should have a nice supper, but Jonathan, who had for some time looked at the things with amazement, desired that they might not be touched; "depend upon it," said he, "these are stolen goods; I was told in town that there are thieves going about, who steal every thing they can lay their hands upon.—I know the baker who made this bread; here is the mark he puts upon it. Dapple shall rest to night, but to-morrow morning early, I will carry every thing to town, and have no doubt but that I shall find the right owners of them."

The fact was really as he suspected; the thieves had stolen the ass, to carry home their booty, but fearing they might be seen in the day time, they had entered a wood, where they tied Dapple to a tree whilst they lay down to sleep, for these wicked men having been up all night, now wished to wait till darkness came, to hide them again from their fellow-creatures.

Having, however, tied the ass rather carelessly, he soon got loose, and wandering from the wood to the high road, with which he was very well acquainted, (for he passed it three or four times a week with his master,) he hobbled along as fast as his heavy load would let him, towards the labourer's cottage, where he

arrived, as I said, to the great joy of its inhabitants, and after a comfortable night's rest, accompanied Jonathan to the town.

The baker, the butcher, the grocer and fruiterer, had discovered their losses early in the morning; they all knew Jonathan, and were too much pleased with this new proof of his probity to take any thing away from him.

Had so large a quantity of goods been stolen from one person, it would have been a heavy loss, but having been taken from so many different ones, it became an object of little consequence to each, and they all agreed that the boy and his family deserved to

be rewarded, that it might encourage them to act with the same probity on other occasions.

All those who heard the story, were loud in their praises of Jonathan, and his father and mother, which surprised him so much, that he asked what he had ever done, to make them suppose him to be a dishonest boy.——"You appear to wonder," said he, "at finding that we are not like the thieves who stole the goods; I see no merit in not keeping what we knew did not belong to us."

He returned home with Dapple and his load, and the children were not a little delighted when their mother promised to make them a cake, and a rice pudding.

The labourer recovered his health and strength, and once more returned to his work, with a grateful heart, and a contented mind.

Jonathan continued his little journey to the town with Dapple, and gained so much by it, that his family were enabled to live very well, enjoying all the necessaries of life, which was as much as they wished for, and it was in a winter evening surrounded by her husband and children, near a blazing fire, that the old woman related this story to me, which struck me so much, that I made a memorandum of the heads of it before I went to bed, concluding that the perusal of it would give pleasure to my dear God-daughter.

THE

NAUGHTY BOY PUNISHED.

GEORGE Norton was very fond of playing tricks, which he thought there was no harm in, but every other person thought them very foolish; and a great many gentlemen and ladies, who visited his papa and mamma, looked upon him as a very naughty boy; and said if he were their son, they would punish him severely whenever they caught him laying his traps to catch people.

He thought it was fine fun when he could contrive to fasten a rope across the passage, and make somebody fall over it; or when he could pin the maid's apron to the leg of the chair without her perceiving it, and make her tear a hole in it when she attempted to rise; not considering, that although his rope was very near the ground, a person might break a leg or an arm by falling over it; many have done so, by their foot sliding when walking quietly along the street; and as to the apron, he was old enough to know, that servants work hard for their wages, and can wear out their clothes fast enough, without his help.

He was sent to school, and kept away

from home a whole year; but he had not been long returned before it was perceived that he was more mischievous than before, for he had learned all the bad tricks of the other boys, to add to those he had already, and he became the plague of every body.

His chief delight was to teaze a poor old man and woman who lived in a cottage near his papa's house; and he was a very ungrateful little boy for so doing, for the good old people were very fond of their young master, and always doing something or other to oblige him, little suspecting him to be the person who played them so many ill-natured tricks.

If old Arthur caught a pretty bird,

he made a present of it to Master George; and his Dame was sure to pick the earliest flowers that appeared in her garden to give to him.

If she happened to have a brood of young chickens, he was always welcome to choose any one he thought pretty, and carry it home with him. In short, there was nothing he wished for that they refused, if they had it in their power to oblige him. Yet, as I said before, this naughty boy was continually doing something to vex and teaze them, persuading himself all the time, that it was *only fun*, and that he was doing no harm.

Once, when Dame Arthur had allowed him to choose the prettiest speckled

chicken among her brood, he returned slily in the evening, when they were quietly sleeping under their mother's wing, in a little out-house behind the cottage, and carried them off, and the hen also, in a basket, and hid them in an old summer-house, where nobody ever went, and where he was certain he might keep them as long as he pleased, without their being discovered.

The next morning he went to see Arthur and his wife, whom he found bewailing the loss of their hen and brood of chickens, and he pretended to be very sorry, and wished he had caught the thief; he assured them if he had, he would have called so loud that he would

have been glad to run away without his booty.

"I dare say you would, master George," said the poor old woman; "you would not stand still and see us robbed; I am sure you would not. But the mischief is done, and a heavy loss it is to us; the chickens were all strong and hearty; I have no doubt but that we should have reared every one of them, and a fine penny they would have brought me."

George suffered these poor people to bewail their loss a whole week, and then he contrived to carry them back into the out-house, without being seen by any body, and persuaded himself that,

as he had fed them well all the time he had had them in his possession, he had done no harm; it was only an innocent trick, to see how the old people would look when they found the nest empty.

This naughty little boy was so fond of his tricks, that he neither minded time nor place; he paid no respect to Sunday; if any thing came into his head, he would as soon set about it on that day as on any other, and once coming out of church in a heavy shower of rain, he ran as fast as he could, and put some pease into the lock of old Arthur's door; so that when they came home, they could not put the key into it, and were obliged to stand so long in the rain before they could get it open, that Dame

Arthur was quite wet, and caught so bad a cold, that she was confined to her bed nearly a whole month with a fit of the rheumatism.

Master George was not, however, eleven years of age, before he met with the punishment he deserved.

Rambling about one morning by himself, as he was very fond of doing, he met a little girl with a pitcher of milk, who being tired of carrying it in her hand, asked him to help her to put it on her head.

"With all my heart," said George, (thinking it would be *fine fun* to throw it down, and make her believe she had let

it slip) "come here—stand very still, and when I have lifted up the pitcher, be sure that you take hold of the handle of it."

"A thousand thanks to you, young master," replied the girl. "I do assure you, that my arm is ready to drop off, although the pitcher is not very heavy; but I have been a long way for the milk, and I must make haste, for my mother is waiting for it, and my little brothers and sisters can have no dinner till I carry it home."

"Very well," said George, lifting the pitcher. "Now then stand still;" and so saying, the moment he had placed it on her head, he took care to let it go,

before she could possibly take hold of it; and the pitcher falling to the ground, it broke in pieces, and consequently the milk was lost.

The poor girl burst into tears, and George laughing, asked her why she did not take hold of the handle; but his laughing was, in an instant, changed into screams, and bitter lamentations, for turning to run away, the milk had made the ground so soft, that his foot slipped, and he fell with his leg under him, and broke it just above the ancle.

Nobody was sorry for the accident, and when it was told that he would be confined three months or more, the people in the village said: "So much

the better, he will be out of the way of doing mischief.

I hope, however, it will teach him that there can be no real pleasure in vexing and tormenting others; that he can only find it by following the good old rule of—*doing as you would be done by.*

THE GOOD BOY REWARDED.

CHARLES lived in the country with his papa, who was so good as to teach him to read and write, and promised him, that if he would be a good boy, when he was a year or two older, he would teach him a good deal more.

When the morning lesson was finished, his papa went into his study, where he always spent an hour; and then took a walk with his son before dinner, and

in that hour Charles was at liberty to amuse himself where he pleased: for his papa knew he was a good boy, and would not get into any mischief.

There was a very fine river at no great distance from the house, and on its bank stood the hut of a fisherman.

This poor fellow maintained his family by carrying the fish which he caught to the next town, where he was glad to sell it for what they would give him; and, as there was great plenty in that part of the country, he got but a poor livelihood, though he took a great deal of trouble; was often wet to the skin many hours together, whilst sitting in his little boat; and sometimes came

home so cold, that all the wood they had in the corner of their little kitchen was scarcely sufficient to warm him.

His wife was a very careful, good woman, and kept her spinning-wheel going early and late; but she, as well as the poor fisherman, had one very great uneasiness, which they foresaw no prospect of being able to remove. Their little boy, (for they had but one child) would never know either how to write or read; his mother could not teach him, for she had never been taught herself; and his father, though he could read a little, never had a moment to spare; he was obliged to go out very early every morning; and when he was fortunate enough to catch his basket full

of fish, he must walk immediately three or four miles to try to sell it, and bring home something for their suppers; and when that was done, was so tired, that he was glad enough to go to bed.

Charles called at the fisherman's one day, to inquire for his dog, which he had missed all the morning; and found little Joe sitting by the table on which he was making marks with a piece of chalk. Charles asked him what he was doing.

"I am trying to write, Sir," said he; "but I only know six letters, and those are a *T*, an *H*, an *E*; and an *S*, an *H*, an *I*, and a *P*." "You have reckoned seven," said Charles—"but how did

you learn them?" "Yes, Sir," replied Joe, "I reckoned the *H* twice; but I learned them from the sign at the ale-house in the village. Somebody told me, that a *T*, an *H*, and an *E*, made *The*; and an *S*, an *H*, an *I*, and a *P*, *Ship*; for I can no more read, than I can write; but I would give any thing in the world if I could. I should be so happy, that nothing would vex me afterwards."

"Then I'll make you happy," said Charles; "I am but a little boy; but if you will mind to be ready for me, every day at twelve o'clock, when I have learned my lesson from my papa, I will come here and teach you; I have an

hour given me to amuse myself as I like, and if you are as willing to learn, as I shall be to teach you, you will soon be able to read and write as well as I do; and I assure you, papa says I do both very well for a boy of my age."

Both Joe and his mother were ready to fall on their knees to thank little Charles, for it was what they both wished for above all things; and the next morning he put his book into his pocket when his papa dismissed him, and went to the fisherman's hut, where he gave Joe his first lesson in Reading; and as soon as he had brought him a little forward, (having provided himself with

pen, ink, and paper,) he began to teach him to write.

Some months passed away in this manner, when a gentleman calling at the house one morning, asked Charles's papa if he knew where his son was gone. He said he supposed he was taking his usual walk, which he always allowed him to do at twelve o'clock, when his lesson was finished.

"I am afraid, Sir," answered the gentleman, "that he does not always amuse himself in a way you would approve of; I see him every day go at the same hour to the house of old Joe the fisherman, and I cannot imagine what pleasure he

finds in such company, unless it is that he goes out with them in the boat."

Charles's papa was a good deal alarmed at this intelligence, and also a little displeased; for he had so good an opinion of his son, that he thought he might have trusted him to go any where, without fearing he would either get into mischief, or run into any kind of danger, and particularly venturing on the river, which he had been ordered never to approach.

The moment the gentleman had left him, he went out in search of Charles, and as soon as he came near the river, began to look up and down, and on

every side, with the utmost anxiety, in the hope of seeing the boat; but not perceiving any thing like it, he grew extremely uneasy, for he concluded that he was gone with old Joe a long way up the river; but not choosing to go home without gaining some intelligence of his son, he went up to the hut, and put his head into the window, which happened to be open, little expecting the agreeable sight which met his eyes. Charles was seated at the upper end of the kitchen table, ruling lines in a copy-book, whilst Joe was reading to him very attentively, and his mother sat at her wheel in a corner of the room, but so delighted with the objects before her, that she forgot her work in the pleasure

she felt at her boy's wonderful progress, and reflecting that she might, perhaps, live to see him clerk of the parish.

Charles was a little confused when he saw his papa, and feared he would be angry at his having undertaken such a task without his permission; but he had no need to have been uneasy; on the contrary, he was very much applauded, and was the very next morning taken into the town, where he was presented with a great number of very pretty books, both for himself and Joe, with an ink-stand for him, and a good quantity of writing-paper and pens and ink. Charles was the happiest of all creatures, when he scampered away to

the fisherman's hut, his little hands filled with the parcels, and his heart beating with joy; and his pleasure was encreased when he spread out his presents on the kitchen table, to the wondering eyes of Joe and his mother.

THE PINCUSHIONS.

MARY, Louisa, and Henrietta, were the daughters of a gentleman of small fortune, who lived in the neighbourhood of Portman-square; he had also four sons, so that though he had all possible inclination to assist the poor, and to relieve the wants of his fellow-creatures, he could seldom indulge himself in so great a pleasure; as the necessary expences of so large a family put it almost entirely out of his power.

"My dear children," he often said, "endeavour as much as possible to render little services to those who stand in need of them, whenever you have an opportunity, and do not be afraid of taking trouble to do so, it will lead you into no expense, and may, sometimes prove of more value than money. I wish my income was equal to my inclination, I would urge you not to withhold that either, when you meet with objects who are really distressed. But I have nothing to spare, so far from it, that it requires mine and your mother's strictest economy to enable us to provide for the wants of so large a family, and to give you suitable educations.

The three young ladies often wished

for money to give to every beggar they saw in the streets, but they knew it was impossible: all they could do was, when they were going to walk in the square, or in Hyde Park, to put a few halfpence, each from her weekly allowance into a little box, which they took with them, and distribute its contents among those who appeared to stand most in need of assistance.

One morning that they had been taking a walk, and had crossed Hanover-square into Swallow-street, in their way home, an enormous butcher's dog, covered with mud, running furiously from some wicked boys who were pelting him with stones, passed so near to poor little Henrietta, that she fell down on

the pavement; and though she did not hurt herself, she was so much splashed and dirtied, that it was impossible for her to go home without a hackney-coach.

The maid servant who attended them was very much distressed, not knowing what to do with her young ladies; the two others had not fallen, but they had all been frightened by the dog, and she found it necessary to take them into some house where they might have time to recover themselves, and send for a coach to go home in.

They were at the door of a poor little shop, where an old man was making a very common looking shoe, but he

welcomed them so civilly, and begged them to walk in, and rest themselves in his *old woman's* room, with so much good-humour, that they were glad to accept of his offer, and were much surprised at the neatness of the little place they were shown into, as well as pleased with the appearance of the good wife, who was sitting on a low chair near the window, knitting a worsted stocking.

She was not accustomed to receive company, and Henrietta being the first who entered the room, dressed in a frock which had once been white, but was now covered with mud, and a hat, tippet, and gloves, nearly in the same state, Mrs. Humphreys was astonished, and taking off her spectacles, was going to

exclaim, "who have we here?" when her husband hobbled into the room with the rest of the party, and acquainted her with the accident which had befallen the young lady.

"Dear me!" said the good woman, what a pity it is to see a nice frock in such a condition! pray, ladies, be seated—but what shall I do? we have but three chairs."

Mary begged her not to give herself any trouble, said they were not fatigued, though they had been a little alarmed, and requested the old man to procure them a coach, and offered to pay him for his time.

Humphreys was not a mercenary man, he did not wish to be paid, but was afraid he should tire their patience, if they were obliged to wait for a coach till he could get one, for he was so lame that he could hardly walk. They were, however, glad to wait, for they had no other person to send, and though near an hour elapsed before his return, his old wife was so good-humoured and chatty, and entertained them so well, that they did not imagine he had been absent more than half a one; and when they were told that the coach was at the door, they were sorry to part with her, and wished her husband had been a little longer.

They could talk of nothing all the

rest of the day, but of the cheerful old woman and her neat little parlour; and the next morning, when they went to take their accustomed walk, called (by their papa's order) at the little shop, and gave Humphreys half a crown, as a reward for his trouble and loss of time; for he had quitted his work, and been idle a full hour, merely to serve and oblige them.

The three sisters never after passed the window without giving him a friendly nod, and enquiring after Mrs. Humphreys; but leaving town about six weeks afterwards, the country presented them with so many new amusements, they found so much to admire, so many things to delight them, that their ad-

venture with the butcher's dirty dog, Swallow-street, and Humphreys and his wife, were quite forgotten.

The weather was remarkably fine, and Mary, Louisa, and Henrietta were always out, sometimes rambling through fine woods, then gaining the summit of a neighbouring hill to look at the sea, and the white sails which were continually passing and repassing at a small distance from the land. Then they would descend into the valley, and follow the windings of the river, and visit the cottages which were scattered on its bank.

In the mean time, poor old Humphreys, completely crippled by the rheu-

matism, which had now seized on both his hands, as well as his legs, unable to work, and having no one to earn a penny for him, was suffering all the pain of confinement, want of fresh air, and proper nourishment: his wife, though old, being still healthy and alert, attended him, and watched over him with the greatest attention and care, but her sight was too far gone to allow of her doing any thing for their subsistence, and they were reduced to the utmost penury.

The truth is, that they had *never* been much otherwise than pinched and straitened, since age had crept upon them, and prevented their earning money, as they had once done; but they did not like

to complain:—they contented themselves with what they could get, and were never heard to grumble or shew the least sign of envy when they saw their neighbours' prosperity. Now, indeed, the case was altered, and when the young ladies returned to town, and that their old walk to Grosvenor-square recalled to their memories the obliging couple in Swallow-street, when they found them bowed down by sickness and distress, they no longer scrupled to make their wants known, and to acknowledge that they were in want of common necessaries. Humphreys was as helpless as an infant, and the good old woman, so worn out with fatigue and watching, that she was little better than her husband.

The amiable sisters, shocked at the distress of these poor people, instead of continuing their walk, returned home as fast as possible, and acquainted their papa and mamma with it; instant relief was sent to them, and a worthy physician, who was a very intimate friend of the family, kindly undertaking to visit and prescribe for them, they were soon restored to their usual state of health, and Humphreys thought himself strong enough to be able to return to his work, but his hands still continued weak, and he could do but little, not sufficient to support his wife and himself, nor was it probable that at his time of life he should ever be able to do it, though he might for some time continue to gain a trifle every day.

Mary, Louisa, and Henrietta were very much interested in the welfare of the good couple, but knew not what plan to adopt for their relief; they knew very well that their papa and mamma, with the best inclination in the world, could not continue to give them the assistance they had for some time afforded them; and since Humphreys could not earn enough by his work to support himself, and that his wife could do *nothing*, it was absolutely necessary that they should be assisted by some means or other.

They talked the matter over every evening, and, even after they were retired to their beds, (for they occupied one room) they proposed numberless schemes with-

out being able to fall upon any one that was likely to answer their purpose.

It was the fate of the youngest of the three sisters, who was the nicest little needle-woman, and the best pincushion-maker of her age, in England, to think of something which she said she was sure would answer, and which the two others caught at with eagerness, and they were all so much pleased and delighted with the scheme, that they knew not how to compose themselves to sleep, or wait patiently for the morning, to put it into execution. I cannot help observing, in this place, how fortunate it was for Humphreys and his wife, that neither Mary or Louisa knew any thing

of that silly jealousy that I have often witnessed with so much pain and regret, between children of one family. I could name many, I am sorry to say it, who would in Mary's place have been so angry that such a little creature as Henrietta should have shewn more quickness than she had done, that she would have rejected the proposal, and have treated it as ridiculous, merely from envy and jealousy, and in contradiction of a younger sister's opinion: and some *Louisa's* there are also, who would have joined with her in laughing at it, from the same unworthy cause.

Had this been the case, with regard to the scheme Henrietta proposed, the

good old couple would probably at this moment be in the work-house, instead of living comfortably, and enjoying the necessaries of life, as they now do; for Mary and Louisa, far from feeling any envy, were delighted at their little sister's *cleverness*, as they called it, and the moment the family met at breakfast, they were so eager to tell their mamma of it, that they both spoke together, and it was some time before they could make themselves understood.

Their mamma approving of their plan, it was agreed that no time was to be lost before they put it into execution: materials for pincushions, needle-books, thread-cases, work-bags, and a

great number of other pretty things were to be collected from all their acquaintance, and their mantua-makers and milliners; their evenings were to be dedicated to the employment of making them; and part of the window in the little shop in Swallow-street was to be made nicely clean, in order to exhibit Mrs. Humphreys' merchandize.

Bits of silk and velvet, twist, gold and silver cord, spangles, and many other things of the kind, were sent from all quarters, and the large bag which the sisters had appropriated to that use, was soon filled with materials for their charitable work, and continued to be as constantly supplied, for all who heard

of it, wished to contribute towards it, and the milliners and mantua-makers of all the ladies who visited at the house were laid under contribution.

The little window, though clumsy leather shoes were exhibited on one side of it, shone forth in the other with all the elegance of fashion. There were ruby pin-cushions, and fawn-coloured needle-books, work-bags of every size and form, and such a variety of pretty things, that even ladies in their coaches stopped to purchase them.

The sale of these trifles made so good an addition to the work Humphreys found the time to do, between his fits

of rheumatism, that they were enabled to live very comfortably; and having the means of affording themselves proper nourishment, both the good man and his wife were in better health when I last saw them than they had been for many years.

The amiable sisters were recompensed beyond expression, by the pleasure they felt whenever they passed by the little shop window; and though they spent some of the summer months in the country, they always took care to leave enough with Mrs. Humphreys to supply her customers in their absence; and it was a considerable augmentation of the pleasure they enjoyed in their

rural excursions, that they could recollect the good people they had left in town, without feeling any anxiety about their situation.

THE PEARL LOCKET.

LEONORA was so extremely desirous of knowing why her aunt had put a small parcel, which she believed to contain some muslin and ribbon, brought by the servant from the town, in a closet where she kept her tea, sugar, and preserves, that she thought of nothing but how to satisfy her curiosity.

Her aunt, who perceived her anxiety,

had not a little augmented it, by refusing to tell her whether it were really muslin, or some other thing; for she had long observed her disposition with great uneasiness, and thought it necessary to endeavour to check it.

Having lost her parents when an infant, Leonora was left to the care of her mother's sister, and might have been extremely happy, had it not been for the restless curiosity which tormented her from morning till night, and even many times robbed her of some hours of sleep. She could not bear that a word should be said, that she did not understand the full meaning of, or that any person should go, or come, or move from their place, without accounting to her

for it; and why? and who? and what? and when? which was heard for ever when she was present, made her so tiresome, that Mrs. West's intimate friends did not scruple when they invited her to their houses, to beg she would leave her niece at home, till she had found the means of correcting her disposition, and of making her less troublesome.

"Pray, aunt, tell me," said Leonora, "why you put that parcel into the closet?"

Mrs. West asked her, why she might not put it there, as well as in any other place?

"Because," replied Leonora, "it

contains muslin and ribbon, and you never put such kinds of things with your sugar and raspberry jam and preserved damsons."

"But, perhaps," said Mrs. West, "the parcel does *not* contain muslin and ribbon."

"Oh dear aunt! pray tell me then," eagerly exclaimed the curious girl, "what *does* it contain?"

"I do not choose to tell you," replied Mrs. West, "nor shall you *ever* know; so make yourself easy about it at once, I am tired of being questioned by you on all occasions, and am fully determined to punish you, whenever you

teaze me to be told what it does not concern you to know."

Leonora was a little ashamed, but she soon recovered herself, and though she found it necessary to endeavour to make her aunt believe that she had got the better of her propensity, she only added art and slyness to her other fault, and in some way or other (she did not care how mean or improper) satisfied her curiosity on every occasion; and either by listening, or by little tattle with her aunt's servants, and the servants of every family she visited, she made herself acquainted with all she wished to know; and if she heard any lady say she wondered why Miss such-a-one did not return to school, Leonora

could answer her in an instant, could tell her of the enormous amount of the last half-year's bill, and what the young lady's papa and mamma had said on the subject. She could tell you, that Master Henderson owed a great deal of money to the pastry-cook, and to the woman who kept the toy-shop; and thus she blazed about the town they lived in, circumstances which the persons they chiefly concerned wished to keep secret, and often caused vexation and trouble in families when it might have been avoided.

Hearing Mrs. West say one morning to a friend, that she was going out to purchase a trinket, to make a present to a lady whose birth-day it was; Leonora,

though she no longer dared to ask her aunt what she intended to buy, watched her so closely, that she hoped she should be able to satisfy herself, without appearing in the least anxious about the matter,

Mrs. West was, however, too quick-sighted not to perceive her intention, and gave her some writing to do whilst she went out. On her return home, she went immediately to her room, where she had not remained long before some company being announced, she joined them in the drawing-room, and Leonora, who only waited for a safe opportunity, flew up stairs, hoping to discover, without having shewn the smallest wish to know it, what had been brought

home for a birth-day present to her aunt's friend.

Oh! how fortunate, thought she, as she entered the room, the key is in the drawer, and there I shall find the little box in which my aunt keeps her trinkets.

The naughty girl did not scruple to turn the key, open the box, and seek for what she wanted to find; but it was not there, and she was turning away, when she perceived something lying on the dressing-table wrapped in silver paper. It was the trinket in question, and Leonora discovered a small pair of cornelian ear-rings, such as she had seen twenty times before, and

which she would not have taken the trouble to walk across the room to look at on any other occasion, yet for this wonderful fine sight, she committed a fault for which she deserved to be severely punished; but her curiosity was satisfied, and that was all she wished for, not troubling her head about the consequences which might follow.

She was leaving the room in haste, fearing that the company might go away, and she might be missed, when something glittering, which lay on the ground near the drawer where she had been rummaging, caught her eye.

It was a pearl locket of her aunt's, which she had thrown down, without

perceiving it, had stepped upon and broken it in such a manner, that she concluded it could never be mended, and therefore, as soon as her fright had a little subsided, and that she could reflect on the matter, she concluded that the only thing she could do was to throw away the pieces of the locket, and pretend to know nothing of it when it was enquired for.

Thus it was that Leonora, by indulging herself in ridiculous fancies, was led to commit a crime; for when Mrs. West the same evening dressing to go out, looked for the locket which she generally wore, and that she could not find it, and likewise perceived, that her trinkets had been rummaged, and that

those which had been in the bottom of the box, now lay on the top, she accused her maid of having taken it, and threatened to have her examined before a magistrate, if she did not immediately produce the locket.

It was impossible for Mrs. West to have the least idea of the truth; she had worn it the evening before, her maid was with her when she undressed herself, and she had given the locket into her hand to put it into the box with her other trinkets.

In the morning Dorcas having been sent into the town on an errand for her mistress, returned with a very handsome shawl thrown over her shoulders, which

she told her mistress had been given to her by her cousin; and though it did not strike Mrs. West at the time as any thing extraordinary, she now looked upon it as a proof of her guilt, and recollected that she had blushed extremely when she came into the parlour.

Poor Dorcas! it was not guilt which had brought the colour into her cheek, but the pleasure of her new finery, for she had never been half so smart in her life; and being a very honest girl, who would not have wronged her mistress or any other person of a single halfpenny for the whole world, she fell into a fit the moment she was accused of theft, and lay so long senseless, that those about her began to despair of her reco-

very. A messenger had been dispatched to her friends to know whether it were true that her cousin had given her the shawl, but he had set off immediately to join his ship at Portsmouth, and they knew nothing about it.

All this while Leonora, who was present, never opened her lips, she had been so often reproved for her curiosity, that she was ashamed to confess the truth; and as she knew her aunt too well to believe she would ever bring the girl to justice, but would content herself with dismissing her, she thought it was needless to expose herself for such a trifle. She did not foresee that the poor girl's good name would be lost for ever, since every person in the

house would know the story, that it would soon be whispered about, and no person in their senses would take a thief into their family. What then was to become of the poor creature? She must be left to starve: or even should any of her friends take compassion on her, grief would soon bring her to her grave, when she perceived that she was looked upon as a dishonest person, and shunned as such by her fellow-creatures.

Leonora did not trouble herself with any such reflections; she could, by holding her tongue, and hardening her heart against Dorcas's tears, hide her own fault, and that was the first object of her care; but she was doomed to be exposed as she deserved, and to be driven

from her aunt's house and protection, whilst the poor girl, whom she had suffered to be so falsely accused, remained in her place, and enjoyed the favour and goodwill of her mistress, and all her family.

Leonora stood by the window, and was looking into the street, when an elderly woman, very meanly dressed, stopped suddenly, fixed her eyes upon her, and a moment after knocked at the door, and desired to speak to the lady of the house.

Mrs. West went to her immediately, though she was greatly agitated, (for she made it a rule never to suffer a poor person to wait for her), but returned to

the parlour in less than ten minutes, with marks of anger evident on every feature, and the broken locket in her hand. The truth was, that Leonora, with all her cunning, had not managed the matter so artfully as might have been expected; for instead of throwing the pieces of the locket into the river, as she might easily have done, when she went to take her usual walk, she dropped them in a narrow street, at the end of the town, thinking, because she was at a good distance from home, the part she was acting could never be discovered. The old woman, however, happened to be just behind her when she did it, and could not help being surprised at her action; for it was plainly to be seen that the pieces of the locket

had not fallen accidentally, but that the young lady had slipped behind the servant who attended her, and thrown them designedly on the ground; and poor as the woman was, not being deficient in understanding, she concluded it was not done from any good motive, as no person would throw away a thing of so much value, though broken; the pearls could not be damaged, and they were very large and handsome.

Not knowing Leonora, she determined to follow her home, and endeavour to discover the meaning of what she had seen, but the young lady was much too nimble, and before she had picked up the pieces from the ground, had turned the corner of the street, and was

gone in an instant. Business, however, calling her into the part of the town where Mrs. West resided, she happened, fortunately for poor Dorcas, to be passing by the house when Leonora stood by the window; and immediately recollecting her features, did not hesitate a moment, but knocked at the door, requested to speak to the lady, and made known the business she came upon, at the same time that she put the broken locket into the hand of its owner.

Mr. West was too well acquainted with her niece's disposition, not to see in an instant the whole truth; and Leonora no longer having it in her power to pretend ignorance, was obliged to confess what she had done.

Dorcas's innocence was clearly proved, the poor woman's honesty rewarded, and the sad girl who had been the occasion of so much sorrow and trouble, met with what she richly deserved. She was hated and despised by every servant in the house, who all declared they did not think themselves safe in living with a person who was capable of exposing them to be suspected of dishonesty; and Mrs. West, perceiving by this last action that, instead of having overcome her curiosity, she was likely to indulge herself in it more than ever, and that the consequences might be more serious than she had ever imagined they could be, thought it necessary to place her under the care of some person to whom she could freely communicate her faults, and

give the power of punishing her severely whenever she deserved it.

She was accordingly sent to school, a hundred miles distant, the mistress of which was a woman a little inclined to treat *all* children harshly, and consequently did not spare those who, in any way, deserved punishment.

Leonora was more afraid of her than she had ever been of any one in her life; she dared not shew the least sign of curiosity without being reproved, for she was continually watched, and never opened her lips to ask the most simple question, without perceiving that an attentive ear was lent to every word she

uttered, nor could she even move without being observed.

When I heard the history of this curious girl, she had been three years under the care of her strict governess, without having been once at home, or having seen her aunt in all that time, and I suppose she will remain with her till she gives strong proofs of having entirely got the better of her dangerous propensity, and the story of the Pearl Locket is quite forgotten.

THE BLIND CHILD.

IN a small house, in a narrow street at York, there lived a journeyman carpenter, with his wife and two children, a boy and a girl. The boy was so fond of learning, that his father and mother, though they could ill afford the money, sent him every day to a little school in the neighbourhood, where he learned to read and write; and as he was very attentive to the instruction which was given to him, he soon made great pro-

gress, and became a particular favourite with the master, who pointed out little James, as the best boy in the school, to every person who came to his house.

Agnes was a year younger than her brother, and was also a very good child; her mother taught her to read and to work, and she was very soon able to mend her own clothes, and even to assist her mother: she was also very fond of reading, but she had few books, and no money to buy more.

There was a large bookseller's shop in the next street, and whenever Agnes was sent out on an errand for her mother, she could not help stopping to look at all the pretty books which were

ranged in the windows, trying to read the titles of them, and wishing she could carry home her little basket-full.

The bookseller had often observed her, and asked her one day, what she was looking at?

Agnes blushed, but as she meant no harm, and had no reason to hide her thoughts, told him freely the truth, that she was admiring his books, and wishing to read them.

"I am always pleased when I meet with children who are fond of reading," said he, "and I will lend you a book, which will make you very good, if you read it attentively; and if you

return it to me as clean and nice as it now is, I will immediately lend you another; you shall not want books whilst you continue to like reading, and that I perceive you take care of them."

Agnes went home so happy, with her book wrapped in a sheet of paper, that she could scarcely speak to tell her mother of her good fortune; she read it twice over before she returned it, and when Mr. Jackson asked her how she liked it, she surprised him by repeating great part of the little stories contained in it, which gave him so much pleasure that he lent her another book, and continued to furnish her with as many as she could read, for she always returned them so clean, that no one would

have supposed they had ever been opened.

James and Agnes were the happiest children in the city of York, they spent their evenings in reading together, or sometimes James read to his sister whilst she was working or knitting by his side; and when their father came home from his work, and their mother had time to rest from her daily occupations, they were very well pleased to sit down with them, happy in seeing their children so well employed, and also at hearing the good advice contained in the little books they were reading.

They were surprised one winter evening (as they were comfortably sitting

round the fire, employed in the agreeable manner I have described), by a knocking at the door of their little habitation. It was the carpenter's sister who entered the room, very meanly dressed, and appearing to be so weak and ill, that she could with difficulty creep to a chair, where she fainted. He had been many years without seeing her, and was so shocked at beholding a person so dear to him in such a wretched state, that both he and his wife shed many tears, and endeavoured by every means in their power to recal her to life. She was put to bed, where, though she recovered her senses, she grew weaker and weaker, and died the following morning.

This poor woman had married a soldier, and had been a great many years abroad, where at length her husband had been killed, and was now returned to the town in which she was born, in the utmost distress, for she had not a shilling left to help herself with. She had a child with her, a girl of seven years of age, who must now become a burden to the carpenter, and unfortunately the poor little creature was quite blind.

James and Agnes were grieved at seeing their cousin in this melancholy state, but both of them offered to do every thing they could for her, and to endeavour to amuse her in some way or other; and they kept their word, for Agnes rose half an hour before her usual time, that she might

help to dress her, and then led her down stairs, where always fearing she would either fall or run her head against something and hurt herself, she watched over her with the greatest care and attention.

As poor Peggy could not see, James read little stories to her when he came from school, and he taught her to say her prayers, which she soon learned very correctly, and could repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Creed at church as well as any of the other children.

The street the carpenter lived in was very near the end of the city, and James and Agnes, in the summer evenings, often took each a hand of Peggy, and led her into the fields, where though she

could not see how beautifully green they were, or admire the flowers which grew in the hedges, she could breathe the fresh air, and enjoy the smell of the wild honeysuckle which James brought her and put into her hands.

Three or four years elapsed in this way. James worked with his father, and Agnes began to think it time for her to do something to get her bread, but knew not what plan she could fall on that would not make it necessary to quit her home. Her mother's health was not so good as it had been, and her poor little cousin was blind and helpless.—Could she think of leaving them?—It was impossible, and she consulted the worthy Bookseller, who, as well as his

wife, had always shewn her how much they felt themselves interested in her welfare.

Mrs. Jackson was so much pleased with her motive for not quitting her family, that she resolved to serve her to the utmost of her power; and having a sister who was the first dress-maker in the town, she engaged her to let Agnes go a few hours to her house every day for a twelvemonth, that she might learn the most simple part of the business, and be able to gain a livelihood by making gowns, at least, in a plain way. She was, however, so very attentive, that long before that time was expired, she could undertake to make plain gowns at home for her neighbours and people

of her own station, and in a few years improved so much, and had such constant employment, that she was obliged to hire girls to assist her. Thus she rendered the old age of her parents comfortable and happy, and took care that the poor little blind child never felt the want of any thing, but that which it was not in her power to procure for her.

ELLEN.

"IF you will come into the drawing-room, Ellen," said little Harriet Denby to her sister, "you will be quite pleased, I am sure; for mamma is going to read the new book to us, whilst we work. Arthur and Francis, Ann and Mary, and all our cousins are already there. Come, pray make haste, I long to hear it: —mamma says it is full of pretty tales."

"It is very odd," answered Ellen,

drawing herself up, that she might appear an inch or two higher, "it is really strange, that my opinion is disregarded. I said yesterday that it would be much better we should each of us read the book to ourselves;—where is the use of plaguing mamma with our books?"

"It will not plague her in the least," replied Harriet," she says she shall like to read it to us very well; besides, my dear Ellen, do but recollect what a number we are in the house just now, with all our cousins; if we were to have the book one after the other, it will not come to me till Christmas, and I....."

"What does that signify?" interrupted Ellen, peevishly; "I will go

and tell them once more, that the book is not to be read aloud; it is very odd, indeed, that they cannot attend to what one says." And away she ran to the breakfast parlour, where she disputed the point so firmly, that the young people, who were but too much accustomed to her domineering temper, and good-naturedly to lean to it, gave way to her opinion, and Mrs. Denby, who had only offered to read to them in the idea of giving them pleasure, preferring a morning visit to a friend, threw the book on the table, and immediately left the room.

Such was Ellen Denby at the age of thirteen; vain of her own opinion, alway choosing to rule, and direct her bro-

thers and sisters, though *she* could not bear controul or advice even from her mother, and still less from her cousins, though they were all a year or two older than herself; she gave orders as freely to one as the other, and, to secure peace in the family, they were good enough to submit to them.

If the little ones liked to play, she was to choose one for them, or they were not to play at all: if a party were proposed, in order to visit any of their young acquaintance in the neighbourhood, she must fix the hour for them to set out, and give the signal when she thought it time to return; and if there happened to be two roads in their way, she must decide which it would be the

properest for them to take.—In short, whether at home or abroad, she was to be the lady paramount, and appeared quite amazed, when any one attempted to dispute her commands.

As soon as Mrs. Denby had left the house, Ellen took up the book and put it into her work-bag. "I shall not be long reading it," said she, "and then you may draw lots to know which is to have it after me."

"I should think it would be better," said her brother Arthur, (who *sometimes* took the liberty of letting her perceive, that he thought she took more upon her than she had a right to do)," it would at least be just as *well*, if my cousins, who

are visitors, were allowed to read it first, and then let Ann, (who is eldest) have it, my turn would come next, and then yours, Ellen, and so on down to Harriet, who is the youngest of the family."

Ellen did not condescend to make any reply to this proposal, but walked off with the book, and having read it, laid it upon the table the next morning, saying, they might *now* settle the matter as they pleased.

The young people, and Arthur in particular, were a little indignant at this behaviour in Ellen, and began to be tired of continually obeying, without being now and then allowed the pleasure of following their own inclina-

tions; but they were all good-tempered, fond of peace and quietness, and to oppose the lady paramount, would have occasioned perpetual war and tumult.

Mrs. Denby had a sister who lived in the country at the distance of six or eight miles, and being invited to spend a week at her house, with her whole party, she fixed on an early day for going; the weather being still warm and pleasant, though the autumn was pretty far advanced.

This lady had only one child, a daughter; she was a year older than Ellen, and not unlike her in disposition, added to which she was a rude, bold girl, delighted when she could lead

people into mischief, fond of playing tricks, and could pass over a high gate, a hedge full of thorns and brambles, or through a muddy ditch, as well as any boy in the county.

The two cousins had not been twenty-four hours together, before they had had two or three disputes, and Ellen, for the first time, met with a person of her own age, who presumed in her presence to have a will of her own. She was extremely surprised when, beginning to give her orders in her usual manner, she heard Arabella say, "*No, I will not.*" And on asking her "Why?" when her answer was, "*because I don't choose it.*" She was quite unaccustomed to such freedom, and so much dis-

pleased at it, that she wished herself again at home, and thought her cousin the rudest, most uncivil girl she had ever seen in her life.

Determining, however, not to give way to her in any respect whatever, though she wished extremely to call upon a young lady in the neighbourhood, with whom she had once been at school, but was not known to any other part of her family; she would not ask her *domineering cousin* (as she called her), to accompany her on her visit, lest she should think it a favour, and tell her, *she would not go*; but the domineering cousin wished for the walk, and proposed it to Ellen, as soon as they had dined, the second day after her arrival;

and the leave of their mothers being obtained, under promise of returning before night, they set off in high spirits and tolerable good-humour, though both determined to dispute every point in which the other should shew any inclination to command.

"It is nearly a mile and a half to Mr. Ascot's," observed Arabella, as they walked along, "we must not stay there above an hour, or we shall be benighted."—

"I shall not leave Emily in an hour, I assure you," said Ellen; "I have a great deal to say to her, and I don't require any one to tell me when I ought to come away."

" I did not suppose," replied Arabella, " that as you do not know the distance, you would be angry at my mentioning it; however, you may stay as long as you please; I do not want to direct you, only you must excuse me, if I leave you when I think it time to return home;—I shall not choose to be rambling through the fields and lanes in the dark."

Ellen unaccustomed to living in the country, and being of a fearful disposition, did not like the idea of being late, even in her Cousin's company, and much less of being alone: she therefore determined, (though she would not for the world, have had it supposed that she acted in compliance with Arabella's ad-

vice) to quit her friend Emily as soon as they had finished their tea, and to be the *first* to propose taking leave.—This she did accordingly ; but the other, (thinking she had now a fair opportunity of returning Ellen's pertness) refused to comply, and was so long before she would consent to go, that it was really almost night before they were half way home.

Neither of the young ladies being in good humour, their walk was not extremely pleasant, and they both began to wish the road shorter ; Arabella, that she might rid herselt of her Cousin's company, which she was heartily tired of, and Ellen, partly for the same reason, and likewise, because she began

to be very much afraid, and to start and tremble at every bush she saw, and at the noise of the fallen leaves which the wind drove along behind her.

"I am sure," said she to Arabella, "your house lies to the right, and if we were to go down this lane, we should be much sooner at home than by continuing along the road."

"And *I* am very sure of the contrary," replied Arabella, "do you imagine that I do not know the nearest way?"

"Common sense must tell you," said Ellen, "that when your house lies on the right hand, you should not turn to

the left; at any rate, this lane will bring us sooner to it, than going such a round-about road as we are now doing. Come, come, let us go this way, follow my advice, you may depend upon it that I am right, and you will thank me by and by for having found out a shorter road to Mr. Ascot's."

"I will go which way you please," said Arabella, with affected civility. "I dare say you are always right, and therefore, since you are *so certain*, let us go down the lane."

It may be wondered at that Arabella, considering what I have said of her disposition, should have become suddenly so complaisant and ready to be guided

by a person she had just before determined to contradict on every occasion. The truth is, that, (though she had no such intention when she left home) she thought she had now a fair opportunity of giving Ellen a little fright, by leaving her in the lurch, and by that means revenge herself for the manner in which she had treated her ever since she came to the house. She accordingly consented, with seeming submission, to go down the lane, though she very well knew it would lead them far from home, and in an exactly opposite direction to her mother's house. She was perfectly acquainted with every turn in the road, every stile, and every field, hedge, and wood in the neighbourhood, for she had always been accustomed to scamper

about for hours together, more like a boy than a young lady; therefore, as soon as she had accompanied her cousin to a pretty good distance from the high road, where another lane crossed that which they were in, she made her turn round so many times, to look at one trifling thing and another, that she could no longer tell which way they came, or which direction her aunt's house lay in.

Arabella pretended to be very uneasy, and said she did not know where they were.

"I will jump over this gate into the field," said she, "perhaps I may see the house, though it is so dark that I doubt

whether I shall be able to discover it, if it is at any distance."

"Do pray, try," answered Ellen, in a trembling voice, for she began to be very much alarmed; "but I beg you, *dear* Arabella, not to stay, for I cannot bear to be here a minute alone."

She assured her she would not be absent a moment, but had no sooner passed the gate, (which she jumped over like a greyhound) than she darted across the field, scrambled over a hedge, crossed another field, and from thence into the high-road, which Ellen had insisted on quitting, and walking briskly on, found herself, in less than a quarter of an hour, at the garden gate.

Ellen, after waiting a few minutes, began to call her cousin as loud as she could raise her voice; but no cousin answered, all was still, and the day-light was closing in very fast. She ran to the gate, and mounted on the second bar of it, but could not see a living soul, and she would have got over into the field, but she had never been used to climb gates, and attempted it in vain. Obliged to return again to the lane, she screamed, and called for Arabella till she was hoarse and tired, and she could now scarcely see the hedge before her.

She now wished to regain the road, but not being able to recollect which way she had come, and leaving it to chance, she followed the wrong lane,

stumbling along in the dark, crying and calling for help, till she at length perceived that the path she had taken led only to a large field, and that she was farther than ever from her aunt's house.

The terrified Ellen had nothing now to do, but to return to the cross lanes, and her cries and sobs encreased when she recollected, that she owed her present dilemma to her pride and conceit, having preferred losing herself among cross lanes and crooked paths, to listening to the directions of another person, though she was sensible that person *must* have been a better judge of the way than she could possibly be, who had never been in that part of the country

before. Fear, however, now got the better of every other consideration, and she would gladly have asked Arabella's pardon, if she had seen her at that moment, and *humbly* have requested her to shew her the way home.

Ellen had little hope of any thing so agreeable; she was well convinced that her cousin had designedly left her, and was bitterly lamenting her own folly, when she heard some person whisle, and presently saw a light coming towards her; but she had unfortunately been told so many ridiculous stories of robbers, and Jack-o'-the-lanterns, ghosts and goblins, giants and fairies, that the instant she saw the light, she uttered a

loud scream, and ran away as fast as the darkness of the night would permit her, so that if the roughness of the road had not occasioned her falling, she would have fled from her aunt's servant, who had been sent out in search of her; for Arabella, to excuse herself, told the family that Ellen would not come with her, but had insisted on seeking a shorter road, and that she had ran home as fast as she could to tell of it, because she was afraid she would lose herself among the cross lanes.

The servant heard her scream, and called her by her name two or three times, but was beginning to fear she would escape him, when her fall gave

him time to come to her: she then knew his voice, and joyfully rose to meet him and his lantern, with whom she soon arrived at the house, but so exhausted with fright and crying, that they were obliged to put her to bed immediately, and her mamma judged it prudent to defer till the next morning the serious conversation she had thought it necessary to hold with her on the subject, when she determined not to spare her, but endeavour to make her see the folly of pretending to be so much wiser than other girls of her age; and this, added to the mortification she had undergone, and which she had so foolishly brought upon herself, had so good an effect on her, that, notwithstand-

ing she now and then could not help showing a little of her natural disposition, she certainly became more circumspect and more cautious of giving her orders, and of refusing the advice of other people.

STRATTON FAIR.

"I DARE say you long for to-morrow," said Mrs. Evans, as she was making tea for her little family, "and I shall certainly wish for your return in the evening, for you have each of you promised to bring me a fairing."

"I will buy you the prettiest tooth-pick-case I can get in the fair," said John.

"I shall buy a brown satin ribbon for mamma," eagerly interrupted Susan. "I heard her admire the colour of Mrs. Taylor's, and I will try to get some exactly like it."

Each of the children spoke with pleasure of the presents they intended for their mother, except Henry, who appeared to be much more occupied with a fishing-rod which he was mending, than with going to Stratton fair, or bringing a fairing to any one. Mary, who was a little too fond of teazing him, asked him, with a kind of sneer, what *he* intended to purchase for his mamma, adding, that she had no doubt but it would be at least an ounce of carraways, for she knew he was very *generous*; and

this speech making her other sisters and brothers laugh very heartily, she thought she had said a good thing, and would have continued her wit, had not Henry, who had finished his work, walked out of the room without answering her.

Mrs. Evans called after him to return, and take his tea before he went to the river, but he was gone in an instant, and she reprimanded Mary for attacking her brother, when he was neither saying or doing any thing to offend her. She endeavoured to excuse herself by saying, he was so careful of his money, that he never would join with them in any thing they wished to do, and she wanted to laugh him out of being so miserly; for her part, she was sure all

her money would be gone before she had been half an hour in the fair.—"And then," said little Edith, (who was very fond of her brother Henry, and had all this time been dressing her doll, in a corner of the parlour, without either speaking or laughing with the others) "then," said she, "you will ask Henry to lend you some of his money, to buy what you want more."

"Well!" said Mary, a little ashamed, "Well!" answered Edith, "and he will lend it to you, as he has done many times already."

The tea being now ready, Mary seated herself at the table, very well pleased to drop the subject, and draw Edith's at-

tention to a large cake, which their mother was cutting for them, and the rest of the evening was spent in their usual way.

The whole family met at supper, Henry returned from fishing, but said he had had no luck, and that he was tired, and should go to bed as soon as he had supped: when he wished his mamma and his sisters and brothers a good night, he surprised them all by saying, he did not intend to go to the fair, and that he meant, as they were to have a holiday, to spend his on the banks of the river, hoping to bring his mother a fine dish of trout, instead of a fairing.

Mrs. Evans was a good deal vexed at

this appearance of sulkiness in Henry, she was displeased with Mary's pertness, and always checked the inclination she shewed to find fault; but was extremely sorry to perceive what she thought a disposition in Henry to resent so seriously his sister's joke, and concluded that his determining to stay from the fair, where she knew he wished to go, and had talked of it with pleasure for the last ten days, must be in consequence of what Mary had said about his money; he had appeared *sulky* at supper, that is, he had not spoken three words to any one, and she was the more confirmed in her opinion, when, after her other children, with their servant, were all gone off in high spirits to Stratton, she perceived Henry strolling

about the garden alone, and that he spent the whole morning in wandering about from place to place like a person who had quarrelled with every one, and knew not what to do with himself. Now, my dear Helen, I must not allow you to form a bad opinion of Henry, notwithstanding appearances are so much against him, for it was not in the least surprising that his mother thought he had declined going to the fair from ill-humour, but she was extremely mistaken, and so are you, if you have any such idea of his disposition.

Henry was one of the best boys in the world; he was generous, charitable, humane, and sweet-tempered;—he knew that his sister Mary liked to call them

all to account, whenever they did any thing which did not exactly suit her, but he made it a rule to let her talk till she was tired, and never to be offended at any thing she said; and he was so far from being hurt at her wit about the carraways, that he did not even listen to it, for he was anxious to finish his rod, fearing it would be too late to have an hour's fishing; and as he was to go early the next morning to Stratton, his mamma would not have any trout for her dinner, which, he knew, would be a disappointment to her; he even forgot his tea in his eagerness to give her pleasure, and ran to the river as fast as he possibly could.

An old man, who was often the com-

panion of his solitary amusements, had been there some time when Henry arrived, but had not caught a single fish, and was packing up his rod and his flies, and preparing to go home.

"The fish be all gone to sleep, Maister Henry," said he, "I have not had one bite, for I came too late.—You will catch nothing to-night."

Henry did not like to return home without trying, and the old man, wishing to stay with him to see what luck he might have, seated himself on a bank, and began to entertain him with the news of the village. Henry would have been quite as well pleased if he had been

silent, but he would not affront him by saying so, and he therefore continued to recount several anecdotes of different persons, which he had told him half a dozen times before, though he did not recollect it; but what he mentioned of a poor woman in the neighbourhood, whom he described to be in the most distressing situation that can be imagined, affected him so much, that he began immediately to put his things up, declaring it was useless to try any longer, and that he was sure he should catch no fish, though he had a moment before said he would not give it up till he had been there half an hour.

The poor young woman in question had three children, and had often been

distressed, though never so much as at present; she had unfortunately married a very bad man, who spent every shilling he could get in drink, and left his wife and children without a bit of bread to eat, or fire to warm them, and on such occasions she had always found a friend in Henry, who had spent whatever money he had in provisions for them.

The good-for-nothing husband had that very evening been at home, and had seized upon every thing he could carry off, even a few halfpence which his wife had saved to buy potatoes, the gown she had on when he entered the house, as well as the children's frocks, and the sheets from the bed; determin-

ing, he declared, to spend a merry day at Stratton fair with some of his jovial companions, without troubling himself about his family, or thinking of the consequences.

"Poor souls!" said the old fisherman, "they must go supperless to bed, and will have neither breakfast nor dinner to-morrow, whilst the sad fellow will spend as much in the morning as would provide for them a whole week.

Henry wished him a good night, and hastened away to the cottage where the poor forlorn woman and her children resided. It was almost dark, but the little casement was wide open, and as he drew nearer he heard the children ask-

ing their mother for some bread, to which she answered, that she had none. He had not a large sum to bestow, but he had enough to prevent their feeling hunger, at least two or three days, and in an instant he threw his little purse through the open window upon the table, and ran off as fast as he could scamper, not wishing that any one should know what he had done. . . . . Poor Henry! what a pity that a kind intention should have been frustrated! had he but entered the cottage, he would there have beheld the wicked husband, sitting in a corner, insisting on his wife's once more examining her drawers, that she might find something else to give him to make merry with; he would not have had the mortifica-

tion of finding, that what he intended for the relief of the distressed woman and her children would only add to the means her husband already had of exposing himself.

He had in reality, as the old man related the matter to Henry, gone off an hour before with a large bundle under his arm; but recollecting, when he was at some distance from the village, that his wife had a small drawer which she kept locked up, and which he had forgotten to make her open, he returned as fast as he could, hoping to find something more worth his trouble than what he had already taken, and that it would enable him to make a jolly week of it; but, disappointed in his expectation,

(for the little drawer contained nothing but two or three letters which she had received from her brother, who was a sailor), he was beginning to quarrel with her, and insist on her giving him something more, when the little purse came so unexpectedly in at the window, and he was not long in snatching it up, and quitting the house with it in the utmost gaiety, without leaving her a single sixpence to supply the wants of her little family.

As soon as Henry, (who knew nothing of what had happened) was at a convenient distance, he hid himself among some trees, expecting to see the poor woman come out of her cottage with a cheerful countenance, to go and

purchase bread for her children; but what was his vexation when he perceived her husband, and heard him say, as he left the door, "the purse is mine; it was sent to me to make merry with, and I will not give you sixpence."

Henry went home with a very heavy heart; he thought of nothing but the poor children, and their being hungry. Mary nodded and winked at her brothers and sisters, to make them observe how *angry* he was, as she imagined, but he did not perceive her, and finding he had still *one sixpence* in his pocket, which by chance had not been put into his purse; the moment he left the parlour, he flew to a little shop in the neighbourhood, bought a brown loaf,

ran with it to the children, and was at home and gone to his bed-room in less than ten minutes.

The next morning he arose early to go a fishing, that he might avoid seeing his brothers and sisters, who would, no doubt, teaze him on account of his not joining their party, and he could not tell them that, without a penny to spend, he had no business at the fair.

As to letting them, or any living creature, know how he came to be so poor, nothing would have induced him to do it; he was so much afraid of being accused of doing a kind action, merely to have it *known*, and to make

himself *talked* of and *praised*, that he often passed in his family for a little miser, when he had given away his last halfpenny in charity.

He left the house before any one but the servants were up, with his fishing-rod in his hand, and his little basket slung over his shoulder, pleasing himself with the hope of catching some trout for his mother, since he was prevented going to the fair, though he was extremely vexed at losing his jaunt, without having done the good he intended, by relinquishing it; and the regret he felt was very much encreased, when the first object he saw was the wicked man who had caused his disappointment, staggering out of the ale-

house, so intoxicated that he could hardly stand, having spent the night and squandered the contents of Henry's little purse, with some of his companions.

The good boy was so grieved, that he had no pleasure in the thought of his fishing, and therefore strolled about the field and garden all the morning, little imagining that he was observed by his mamma, and still less that his behaviour was giving her an opinion of him which he so little deserved.

Mrs. Evans in the mean time was preparing a severe remonstrance for her son; determining not to suffer him to give way to what she thought a pettish,

sulky disposition, which, if allowed to grow up with him, would make him disliked by others and unhappy in himself, and in consequence of this determination, when the little party returned from the fair, she gave them strict orders, and to Mary in particular, not to take any notice of what she termed Harry's ill-humour.

The dinner was quite ready when they came home, and they had so much to tell and so many different things to describe and to talk of, that Henry's silence and mortified air were scarcely noticed, and the instant the cloth was removed, the table was filled with sweetmeats and fairings of one kind and another; but when Henry saw his sisters

and brothers each present their mamma with what they had brought her from the fair, and he recollected that he had nothing to give her, not even a little trout, his eyes filled with tears, and he hastily quitted the room.

Fearing, however, they would think he was out of humour, he joined the family at tea-time, and accompanied them on a walk to the river-side, where Mrs. Evans wished to go to enjoy the evening air; and they had not walked far, before they perceived the old fisherman coming towards them, and who began to exclaim as he drew a little nearer: "Bless your dear heart, Master Henry! you be the best young gentleman that was ever born. I couldn't sleep

for thinking how you had been tricked; but never mind it, I have good news to tell you for poor Dorothy; her mother arrived this afternoon in her little market-cart, and took her and her children away to Cowslip-Farm, where she says she has plenty for them all, and will never let her good-for-nothing man come near them any more; I am quite happy about the poor soul and her babes, though I am cruelly vexed that he should have had all your money to spend at the ale-house."

During this speech, Henry (whose confusion could not be described) endeavoured by every means to stop the old man's tongue, but without being able to accomplish it; he was determined

to tell out his tale; and Mrs. Evans, who was astonished at the beginning of it, was too anxious to hear the whole, to suffer him to attend to her son's hints, even had he been inclined to do so; on the contrary, she insisted upon his explaining the whole matter, which he did in a few words, though his praises of Henry would have lasted some time longer, had not his mother interrupted him, that she might herself have an opportunity of bestowing on him those commendations which she saw he deserved, and also, to excuse herself for having condemned him so unjustly.

It is necessary to inform you, my dear Helen, that the old fisherman, struck at Henry's quitting him so suddenly the

evening before, and well acquainted with the disposition he had shewn to serve and assist different persons in the village, suspected his design, and curious to know whether he were right in his conjecture, had followed him so closely that he had seen him throw his purse in at the window of Dorothy's cottage. He afterwards heard of her husband's having been in the room at the time of his seizing the money, and having spent it at the ale-house. All this he recounted to Mrs. Evans, as well as many other things, which proved equally his goodness of heart and his modesty.

His brothers and sisters begged his pardon a thousand times for having called him *miser*. Mary was particu-

larly ashamed of her behaviour on different occasions to her brother, and with tears in her eyes said, she hoped he would forgive her, and forget all the unkind and uncivil things she had said to him. Little Edith jumped upon the bank, and, kissing her favourite Henry, said, "I knew they would one day find out what a good boy you are, though they would not believe me when I told them so."

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